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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES  
1987



TED SCHWINDEN, GOVERNOR

COGSWELL BUILDING

## STATE OF MONTANA

Solid & Hazardous Waste Bureau  
(406) 444-2821

HELENA, MONTANA 59620

STATE DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

June 26, 1987

JUL 6 1987

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RE: Preliminary Environmental Review  
Kalispell Wrecking Storage Lot

Ken Jackson, Building Permits, City of Kalispell, Drawer 1997  
Board of County Commissioners, 800 South Main, Kalispell  
Jim Swartzenberger, 115 South Cedar Dr., Kalispell  
Andy Epple, Flathead Regional Development Office, 723 5th Ave East,  
Room 412, Kalispell  
Gary Stempin, Flathead County JVP, P.O. Box 168, Kalispell  
Water Quality Bureau, DHES, Cogswell Bldg., Helena  
Tom Ellerhoff, Environmental Sciences Division, DHES, Helena  
Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Complex, Helena  
Documents Section, State Library, Capitol Complex, Helena  
Drew Paslawsky, Flathead County Health Dept., 723 5th Ave. E., Kalispell  
Lonnie & Bunnie Hanson, 111 South Cedar, Kalispell  
John & Ruth Klein, 1470 Hwy 2 East, Kalispell  
Douglas & Germane Lister, 1410 Hwy 2 East, Kalispell  
Jay & Delores Hanson, 22 Shady Lane Drive, Kalispell  
Perras, Inc., 34 Shady Lane, Kalispell  
Earl Everet, 131 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Wrangler Oil, 1454 Montana #35, Kalispell  
Olivia DePauli & Sandra Rosetti, 116 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Steve & Diane Henthorn, 143 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Mr. & Mrs. Schule, 159 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Ira & Ruth Weaver, 169 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Gordon & Nancy Holland, 173 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Anita Harding, 171 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Thomas Harding, 180 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Ruth & Bruce Guy, 164 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Robert Tuck, 147 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Glenda Kirkland, 156 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Marla Roberts, 128 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Sharon Cleft, 119 South Cedar, Kalispell  
Ruth Hughes, 155 South Cedar, Kalispell

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pursuant to the Administrative Rules of Montana, 16.2.604, the following Preliminary Environmental Review has been prepared by the Department of



Health and Environmental Sciences concerning Jim Swartzenberger dba  
Kalispell Wrecking Storage Lot.

The purpose of the Preliminary Environmental Review is to inform all interested governmental agencies, public groups or individuals of the proposed action and to determine whether or not the action may have a significant effect on the human environment. This Preliminary Environmental Review will be circulated for a period of fifteen (15) days at which time a decision will be made as to our future action.

If you care to comment on this proposed action, please do so within the allotted time.

Sincerely,



Carol Fox  
Solid & Hazardous Waste Bureau  
Environmental Sciences Division  
Telephone (406) 444-2821

CF/pm  
Encl.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES  
Cogswell Building, Helena, Montana 59601  
(406) 444-2821

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Division/Bureau Environmental Sciences Division--Solid & Hazardous Waste Bur.

Project or Application Jim Swartezenberger/dba Kalispell Storage Lot

Description of Project Establishing and licensing a motor vehicle wrecking facility at 115 South Cedar Dr. in Kalispell, MT

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

|  | Major | Moderate | Minor | None | Unknown | Comments on Attached Pages |
|--|-------|----------|-------|------|---------|----------------------------|
| 1. Terrestrial & aquatic life and habitats                         |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 2. Water quality, quantity and distribution                        |       | X-----X  |       |      |         | X                          |
| 3. Geology & soil quality, stability and moisture                  |       |          | X     |      |         | X                          |
| 4. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality                          |       |          |       | X    |         | X                          |
| 5. Aesthetics  |       | X-----X  |       |      |         | X                          |
| 6. Air quality   |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 7. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 8. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 9. Historical and archaeological sites                             |       |          |       | X    |         | X                          |

# POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

|  | Major | Moderate | Minor | None | Unknown | Comments on Attached Pages |
|--|-------|----------|-------|------|---------|----------------------------|
| 1. Social structures and mores                                     |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 2. Cultural uniqueness and diversity                               |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 3. Local and state tax base & tax revenue                          |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 4. Agricultural or industrial production                           |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 5. Human health  |       |          | X     |      |         | X                          |
| 6. Quantity and distribution of community and personal income      |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 7. Access to and quality of recreational and wilderness activities |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 8. Quantity and distribution of employment                         |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 9. Distribution and density of population and housing              |       | X-----X  |       |      |         | X                          |
| 10. Demands for government services                                |       |          | X     |      |         | X                          |
| 11. Industrial & commercial activity                               |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 12. Demands for energy   |       |          |       | X    |         |                            |
| 13. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals                    |       | X        |       |      |         | X                          |
| 14. Transportation networks & traffic flows                        |       |          |       | X    |         | X                          |

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction Flathead Cty Junk Vehicle Program, Regional Development Office, and Health Dept.

Individuals or groups contributing to this PER. same as above, Jim Swartzemberger

Recommendation concerning preparation of EIS not necessary

PER Prepared by: Carol Fox  
Carol Fox

Date: June 26, 1987

Swartzenberger PER  
Kalispell Wrecking Storage Lot

#### General Comments

The Montana Motor Vehicle Recycling and Disposal Act requires the licensing and screening of motor vehicle wrecking facilities from public view. No junk vehicles can be visible from any point six feet above the centerline of a public road. A junk vehicle is a dismantled, ruined, wrecked or discarded motor vehicle that is inoperative and unlicensed.

The applicant, Jim Swartzenberger, proposes to establish a 1/2 acre storage yard for wrecked vehicles awaiting insurance settlement and disposal in other licensed motor vehicle wrecking facilities where vehicles may be dismantled or crushed. He is required by state law to obtain a wrecking facility license because he will have four or more junk vehicles at a single location. The applicant plans to use the proposed site for car storage only.

To be licensed, a wrecking facility must meet local zoning regulations, be shielded from view of public roads, and not cause a significant impact on the human and physical environment. The proposed facility meets the first two requirements. The purpose of this Preliminary Environmental Review (PER) is to determine whether the facility will cause a significant impact on the environment to the extent that an environmental impact statement is needed. This PER and issuance of the license will be predicated on the fact that the applicant will comply with state law and will not be dismantling, repairing, or crushing vehicles on-site.

#### Potential Impacts on Physical Environment

2. Water quality, quantity and distribution
3. Geology and soil quality, stability, and moisture

The proposed storage yard is located approximately 250 feet from Spring Creek. It is near, but not in, the 100-year floodplain of the Flathead River.

Typically, the operation of wrecking facilities over time characteristically results in accidental spillages of motor fluids from dismantling and recycling operations. Examples of such fluids include motor fuels, oil, coolant, brake fluids, and grease. Potential impacts to water quality exist from flooding of the facility or from drainage of these fluids either into ground or surface waters.





The water table in the area of the proposed facility is shallow; the average seasonal depth to groundwater is approximately 8 feet. The soils are typically sandy/loam at the surface and sand/gravel two to four feet below the surface. Because of the shallow water table and high permeability of the soils, it is likely that any contaminants spilled on the ground at the facility will reach the groundwater, and subsequently the surface waters.

Since the applicant will use the site for storage only, the only motor fluids likely to contaminate the ground are those from stored vehicles that have damaged oil pans, radiators, etc. The applicant will be required to check for and contain any leaking fluids. If the facility is operated properly no motor fluids should contaminate the soil or ground and surface waters.

If a spill does occur, motor fluids could easily migrate to the groundwater and contaminate a domestic well at a home 70' south of the facility. All other homes in the immediate area are on the Evergreen Water System. The DHES considers the potential impact to water quality for the user of the domestic well as moderate and for all others as minor.

Any violations of the water pollution laws are enforceable under the Montana Water Quality Act.

#### 4. Vegetation cover, quantity, and quality

The applicant will disrupt the ground surface to dig post holes. Moving vehicles in and out of the yard and the storage of vehicles in the yard will displace the vegetative cover currently in the yard. This displacement should be minor and reversible.

#### 5. Aesthetics

The proposed site is visible from Highway 35 to the north, Shady Lane to the east, and South Cedar Drive to the west and south (see enclosed sketch). The applicant plans to screen the yard from view of these public roads with a 9' to 10' metal fence made of horizontal panels with no gaps between the panels. He has constructed a temporary fence on the west, south, and north that has a wooden support frame on the outside. If his site is approved for licensing, he will move the support frame to the inside and construct east shielding. Due to site topography, the east shielding may need to be higher than 10'. Shielding must be of sufficient height so that junk vehicles in the facility cannot be seen from any public roads.

Although state law requires shielding from public roads, it does not require shielding from private roads or homes. Even with 9' to 10' screening, junk vehicles within the facility may be visible from parts of the private road through the Spring Creek trailer park abutting the north side of the facility, from a few mobile homes in the Spring Creek trailer park, and from a residence abutting the south side of the facility.



Aesthetics is subject greatly to individual interpretation. What one person finds offensive another person does not. Likewise, what is considered attractive in one setting may not be in another setting. A solid metal fence may be viewed as unattractive to some neighbors and not to others. Junk vehicles are typically considered eyesores.

The DHES considers the potential aesthetic impact to any neighboring residents able to view the yard from their homes as moderate and the potential aesthetic impact to others, if any, as minor. Should the site and surrounding area be zoned residential as expected, the applicant may store junk vehicles at the site no longer than five years after the zoning adoption (see discussion in item 13).

#### 9. Historical and archeological sites

A cultural resource file search conducted by the State Historical Preservation Office revealed no current record of historical or archeological sites at the facility site.

### Potential Impacts on Human Environment

#### 5. Human Health

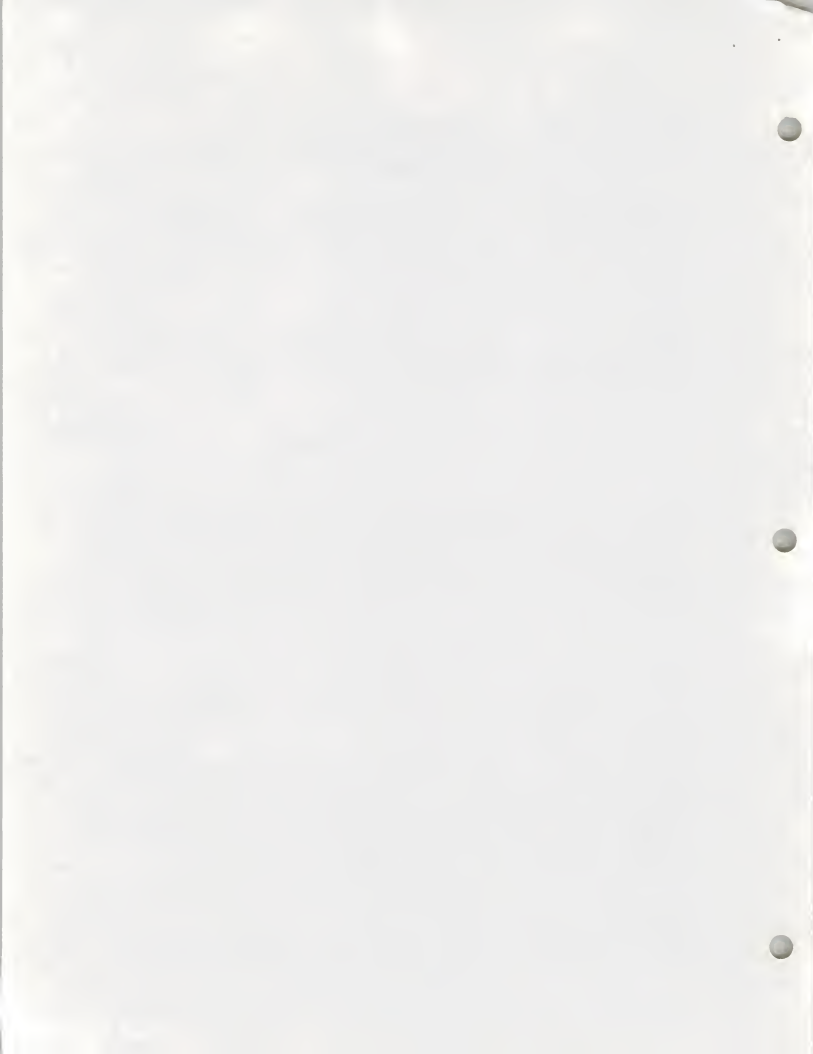
Junk or abandoned vehicles can provide a potential security habitat for animals such as rodents, skunks, and other vermin that can create a health hazard. A wood pile, abandoned farm machinery, furniture or other debris may provide similar habitat. Human activity in the yard and the small size of this yard will minimize this potential. Screening and locking the facility will limit the accessibility of the yard to children from nearby homes. For these reasons, the DHES considers the potential health hazard from this proposed facility to be minor.

#### 9. Distribution and density of population and housing

Wrecking facilities, particularly unscreened ones, are considered unattractive and, thus, detracts to neighboring property values. Increased traffic and noise associated with wrecking facilities may also decrease neighboring property values.

Because the facility will only be used as a storage area, disruptions from increased traffic and noise should not occur. Also, screening the yard should minimize the potential decrease in property values of neighboring residences due to aesthetics. However, as stated previously, junk vehicles in the yard may be visible from the house abutting the south fence and from mobile homes in the east portion of the Spring Creek mobile home park. Residents of these homes may be offended by the view of junk vehicles from their homes. This viewpoint may make it difficult to sell these homes and may cause a property value decrease.

The impact to property value from this proposed facility, if any, is difficult to quantify. Property values are usually protected by zoning or private covenants, which are not presently in effect at this



facility site. The DHES considers the potential impact to the distribution and density of population and housing to be moderate for residents who might view the yard from their homes and minor overall.

10. Demands for governmental services

State and local junk vehicle program officials will routinely inspect the facility to assure its compliance with state law.

13. Locally adopted environmental plans and goals

Administrative Rule 16.14.201 states in part "there shall be submitted with the (wrecking facility license) application a statement signed by the appropriate local government official having knowledge of local zoning ordinances certifying that the site of the proposed facility does not violate any local government ordinances in effect on the date that the application is filed with the Department." Jim Swartzenberger filed his application with the Department on 2-26-87. In a 3-13-87 letter, the Flathead Regional Development office certified that the facility is in technical compliance with local zoning and ordinances as the property is currently not zoned.

The Development Office wrote "technical" compliance because although establishing the facility does not violate current zoning, it is not consistent with the Flathead County master plan which calls for suburban residential land uses for this property. The property is part of an area scheduled to be zoned residential and possibly light commercial in July 1987. Wrecking yards/storage lots are not permitted uses in residential/light commercial zoning districts. The master plan is considered a guideline, not an enforceable regulation such as zoning. DHES rules require the Department to consider proposals meeting current zoning regulations, not master plans.

According to Flathead County comprehensive zoning regulations, any nonconforming use in a zoned area must revert to a conforming use within five years after passage of zoning regulations. Therefore, if the applicant receives approval to establish a storage yard at the proposed site, and the site is later zoned residential, the applicant must discontinue using the site as a storage yard within five years of zoning adoption.

Because of the imminent residential zoning of the property and because wrecking facilities/storage lots and residential homes (including mobile homes) are considered incompatible adjacent land uses, the DHES considers the potential impact to locally adopted environmental plans and goals to be moderate.

14. Transportation networks and traffic flows

Since the facility will be used as a storage yard only and will not be advertised, no noticeable increase in traffic is expected. Only the applicant, insurance adjusters, and owners of the towed vehicles will be allowed in the yard.



Map and sketch of proposed facility







